

THE

ל'פ"א

SHEKEL



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March - April 2008



This broken Star of David
was erected in the Vidzgirus forest.

"Here, in this place, the Nazis and their local helpers, in the years 1941-1944, murdered tens of thousands of Jews - children, woman, men and old people, most of them from other countries. Let their memory last forever".

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Edward Schuman, Editor

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President's Message

BY Mel Wacks

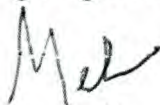
I hope that you like the medal you received along with your 2008 membership card, commemorating AINA's 40th Anniversary. I want to extend AINA's sincere "thanks" to Vince Bohbot, Vice President of The Highland Mint of Melbourne, Florida who generously offered to produce our annual medal at no charge. The medals are of top quality, and I want to highly recommend this mint to you if you are considering producing a medal for any occasion. They also produce art medals of the highest quality -- they are the official minter for the Jewish-American Hall of Fame. Vince can be reached at (800) 544-6135 or vbohbot@thehighlandmint.com. If you contact him tell him that you are a member of AINA to get a special deal.

It looks like all systems are go for the AINA tour to Israel from October 23-November 5, 2008. Even though the deadline for reservations is past, there still may be room for a few more. If interested, contact me at (818) 225-1348 or ainapresident@lycos.com for further information.

It's not too early to think about attending AINA's Annual Meeting that will be held in conjunction with the American Numismatic Association's annual convention in Baltimore from July 30-August 3. Our meeting will be held on Thursday, July 31 at 1:00 in the Baltimore Convention Center; we will have an outstanding speaker, refreshments, and schmoozing.

This year, marking Israel's 60th anniversary, is a good time to reflect on why we collect Israel's coins. Sure, they are beautiful, they are often made from precious metals, and they honor historic occasions as well as significant men and women -- but first in importance, I believe, is that every time anyone purchases a coin, medal, etc. from the Holy Land he or she is stating support for a true democracy that is the homeland for a much maligned people, surrounded by mostly unfriendly neighbors. It's the least that we can do.

Lastly, we are running low on the Israel silver coins that we offer to members free when they give a gift membership. Because of the current high price of silver, each free coin's melt value is nearly the same as the cost of a membership! So give gift memberships now, before this offer must be discontinued.



Editor's Page

By Edward Schuman

I must apologize to those members who attended the F.U.N. Convention in Orlando the beginning of January and found us missing. Florence and I had planned to attend but I was hospitalized with a fungus infection which in many cases is fatal. It is one month later and hopefully I am on the way to recovery.

Being confined to our condo this past month, I have had the time to research many of the unusual items of Jewish interest in my collection and write the articles. In my opinion, this is one of the better issues of the Shekel.

There has been some changes in the Board of Governors of A.I.N.A. The missing Board members will be replaced, and we hope to attract some new ideas and thoughts concerning the operation of the organization. Both Mel and Donna have done super jobs and as Florence can tell you, it is a very time taking chore. I myself have undertaken the responsibility of making certain that the computer list of members is correct and up to date.

In this regard we ask our members who are relocating, even for a few months as snow birds, to let Donna know so we can correct your listings. It is no fun to have copies of the magazine returned by the post office with the notation moved, and a \$1.50 return postage fee which we must pay. And it does take time to research the correct address so that your magazine be can be received. We are all volunteers. Please assist us.

This has not been an easy issue for me to get out, due to my illness, but hopefully things will improve for the next issue.

Till then,



The Hebrew Veterans of the War with Spain

By Joseph S. Topek

The Spanish American War was fought from 1898 to 1900, and while historians are still debating the political motives behind the war, it represented the first large scale military operation on foreign soil since the Mexican War over 50 years earlier. It was also the first opportunity for many of the newly arrived Eastern European Jews to serve in the United States armed forces. While more Jews served in the Union and Confederate armies during the Civil War, some 5,000 Jews were estimated to have served in the War with Spain.

By 1898 there were a few Jewish career officers, most notably Adolph Marix, a Naval Academy graduate who was Executive Officer of the ill fated battleship Maine, which was sunk in Havana Harbor and became the pretext for the hostilities. When the call went out for volunteers, young Jewish men joined with their non-Jewish comrades and enlisted in state regiments, much as they had done during the Civil War. While there were Jews serving in regiments from nearly every state that sent volunteers, the largest numbers, naturally, represented those states with large Jewish populations. The first American soldier to be killed in the attack on Manila was a Jew, as was the first of the Rough Riders, the famous regiment led in part by Theodore Roosevelt, to be killed in action.

In the 19th Century the leading veterans organization was the GAR – the Grand Army of the Republic – the national organization of Union veterans of the Civil War. The GAR dominated veterans affairs and was a political power in its own right. When the veterans of the SAW (Spanish American War) returned they too founded their own organizations, notably the United Spanish War Veterans (USWV). The Hebrew Union Veterans Association had formed in 1896 as an organization for Jewish veterans of the Union army, as a response to charges that Jews had not done their part for the Union as well as to provide fellowship and mutual support. Jewish veterans returning from the Spanish American War formed the Junior Hebrew Veterans Association on December 11, 1899 and shortly changed the name to the Hebrew Veterans of the War with Spain. Theodore Roosevelt was an honorary member. Although this group has always been a part of the known history of American Jewish veterans organizations, and is a forerunner of the Jewish War Veterans, until now little has been published regarding its membership or programs or its relationship with the older Hebrew Union Veterans group. A recently discovered

monograph by Harry Raymond entitled "Reminiscences of the Early Days of the Jewish War Veterans of the USA" provides many important facts previously unpublished in earlier accounts. Raymond was the first Commander of the Department of New York, the state level of the organization, and while the monograph is not dated it appears to be from the late 1930's or early 1940's.

When the Hebrew Union Veterans dedicated an imposing monument at the Salem Fields Cemetery in Brooklyn, the keynote speaker at the dedication was General Nelson A. Miles, Commander in Chief of US forces during the SAW. In 1906 the Hebrew Veterans of the War with Spain dedicated a plot at Mount Zion Cemetery to the Jewish dead of the SAW. The two organizations co-existed until 1917 when the diminished numbers of Civil War veterans finally disbanded and joined together with the veterans of the SAW. At that time the officers were known as Colonel, Lt. Colonel, and Major. The first commander (colonel) of the organization was Dr. Samuel J. Kopetzky who served during 1900. He was succeeded by Maurice Simmons, a politically connected SAW veteran who had been outspoken in fighting anti-Semitism for many years. While the Hebrew Veterans of the War with Spain was almost exclusively a New York organization, it gave Simmons a very visible platform. In 1903 he nominated Alfred E. Smith for the State Assembly and that same year used his influence to help convince the New York Board of Aldermen to speak out against the Kishniev Pogroms and urge Washington to intercede. He served as National Commander from 1901 to 1905 and again in 1917. In 1908 Simmons was elected New York Department Commander of the United Spanish War Veterans organization despite, according to Raymond, a "vicious campaign of anti-Semitism." Subsequently, in 1911, he was elected National Commander of the same group, the first time a Jew held national office in any veterans organization. (Isadore Isaacs, a founding member of the Hebrew Union Veterans Association, served as National Junior Vice Commander and also Commander of the Department of New York of the GAR.) Simmons' tenure was not without controversy as he attempted to de-emphasize overtly Christian aspects of the USWV and also to desegregate the organization.

The Hebrew Veterans also began to intercede on behalf of Jewish military personnel who were serving in the army before World War One. While no major conflicts occurred during this period, many Americans saw service along the Mexican border in 1915-16 keeping Pancho Villa out of Texas, in Haiti, and in the Philippines. The organization interceded with military officials to obtain leaves for

Jewish soldiers, provided them with holiday celebrations, and even petitioned President Taft to allow Jewish personnel to observe Yom Kippur in 1913. One of their better known campaigns, led by then past-Commander Simmons, was to overturn the discriminatory policies against Jews of the New York National Guard. Despite so many New York Jews having served in state military units from the time of the American Revolution, the state guard units did not permit Jews to serve as officers and would openly advertise for "Christian" recruits. The case of Sgt. Littman, who was denied a promotion to Lieutenant because he was a Jew, was resolved in 1913 as well as a subsequent case of discrimination in 1916.

After the conclusion of World War One, in which over 200,000 American Jews had served, a series of vicious pogroms racked Eastern Europe with thousands of Jewish victims. Prominent American Jews began to organize protest meetings and urge the United States government to intervene. On May 21, 1919 a mass meeting in Madison Square Garden was preceded by a parade led by "several thousand Jewish soldiers, sailors, and marines" who were veterans of the World War. When the pogroms intensified a second parade and rally was held in November of that year where Raymond reports that 10,000 Jewish veterans participated including those who served in the Civil War, SAW, Allenby's Palestine campaign, and the World War.

Now, with thousands of Jewish veterans of World War One, it was time to once again transform the organization. Again, it was Simmons who took the lead, and early in 1920 the Hebrew Veterans of the Wars of the Republic was formed with him as National Commander. There were initially three posts, with the Manhattan Post No. 1 assuming all of the existing membership of the Hebrew Veterans of the War with Spain. Most of the initial leadership of this group was SAW veterans, many of whom were past leaders of the earlier Hebrew Veterans group. In 1922 the unwieldy name was changed to the still-unwieldy Jewish Veterans of the Wars of the Republic, which was indicative of a new comfort level with the word "Jew" in the organization's name. "Jew" was sometimes a pejorative term, whereas "Hebrew" evoked a Biblical majesty that even non-Jews who read the Scriptures could relate to. Perhaps the time had come to take ownership of the word Jew and use it proudly. In 1926 the name Jewish War Veterans would be adopted and is still in use.

The Hebrew Veterans of the War with Spain issued a badge that was illustrated in an article by Dr. Uriel Paul Federbush in the Shekel (vol. XIV, #3). It closely resembled the badges issued by the United Spanish War Veterans, incorporating the motifs of eagles, shields, and

an American flag suspension ribbon. The dramatic difference, however, was that the United Spanish War Veterans membership medal had a Greek Cross suspended from the ribbon with each arm of the cross bearing the words Cuba, Porto Rico (sic), Philippine Islands, and USA respectively with the four compass directions on the reverse. While this was not an overbearingly "Christian" cross, the membership badge of the Hebrew Veterans of the War with Spain incorporated nearly identical elements with the exception that the pendant is a six pointed star instead of the cross. Each point of the star depicts a branch of the military; infantry, cavalry, artillery, engineers, signal corps, and navy. This badge is an excellent example of how Jewish veterans incorporated their pride in having served their country into a uniquely Jewish object that reflected their identity as Jews.

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Illustration 1 Membership Badge, Hebrew Veterans of the War with Spain Manufacturer: Dieges & Clust, New York, NY

Photo courtesy of the National Museum of American Jewish Military History

Illustration 2 Membership Badge, Hebrew Veterans of the War with Spain Manufacturer: Dieges & Clust, New York, NY Medal pendant

Illustration 3 Membership Badge, United Spanish War Veterans Manufacturer: H.E. Smith, Indianapolis, IN c. 1904

Illustration 4 Maurice Simmons Commander-in-Chief, Hebrew Veterans of the Wars of the Republic Program, Purim Mask and Civic Ball, March 14, 1922



Illustration 1



Illustration 2



MAURICE SIMMONS
*Commander-in-Chief Helene Veterans, Wars of the Republic
 Past Commander-in-Chief United Spanish War Veterans
 Commissioner of Assessments of New York City*

Illustration 4



Illustration 3

This medal has been minted in 1983 to commemorate
the Polish-Jewish Chopin and Brahms pianist,
Arthur Rubinstein



Arthur Rubinstein (January 28, 1887 – December 20, 1982) was a Polish pianist who is widely considered as one of the greatest piano virtuosos of the 20th Century. He received international acclaim for his performances of Chopin and Brahms and his championing of Spanish music.

Rubinstein was born **Artur Rubinstein** in Łódź, Poland to a Jewish family, and studied in Warsaw. He made his debut in Berlin in 1900, followed by appearances in Germany and Poland and further study with Paderewski. In 1904, he went to Paris, where he met the composers Ravel, Dukas, and the violinist Jacques Thibaud. He also played Saint-Saëns' Piano Concerto No. 2 in the presence of the composer.

Rubinstein made his New York debut at Carnegie Hall in 1906, and thereafter toured the United States, Austria, Italy, and Russia. In 1912, he made his London debut.

During World War I Rubinstein lived mainly in London, accompanying the violinist Eugène Ysaÿe. From 1916 to 1917, he toured Spain and South America, developing an enthusiasm for the music of Granados, Albéniz, de Falla, and Villa-Lobos. He was the dedicatee of Villa-Lobos' "*Rudepoema*", one of the most difficult piano pieces ever written.

During World War II, Rubinstein lived in the United States and became a naturalized citizen in 1946. He refused to play in post-war Germany because of the Nazi extermination of members of his family. He retired from the stage in 1976, as his eyesight and hearing were rapidly deteriorating. He became mostly blind in later life.

Although best known as a soloist, Rubinstein was also an outstanding chamber musician, partnering with such luminaries as Henryk Szeryng, Jascha Heifetz and Gregor Piatigorsky. In addition to Chopin,

he also recorded the music of Beethoven, Brahms, Schubert, Schumann, Dvořák, and Rachmaninoff.

Rubinstein was generally regarded as a Romantic pianist, but was Classical in the sense that he rarely deviated from the printed score. Rubinstein favored an uncluttered interpretive approach, which emphasized overall structure over detail. He never aspired to the stratospheric level of technique achieved by Vladimir Horowitz or Josef Hofmann, but was more than equal to the task of the standard repertoire. Rubinstein's tone was mellow and round, even at full volume, while his pianissimos penetrated to the far reaches of the concert hall. Fluent in eight languages, Rubinstein's memory was formidable. (He once learned Franck's Symphonic Variations while on a train en route to the concert, without the benefit of a piano.)

Rubinstein died in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1982 at age 95. His ashes were interred in Israel

Medal Description

Obverse: The portrait of Arthur Rubinstein, his name in Polish transcription, the dates 1886 – 1982

Reverse: The inscription in Polish commemorating the 17th Piano Competition of the Polish Music in Slupsk in 1983

Diameter - 70 mm (2 ¾ ") weight – 128,70 gr.

Metal – bronze, beautiful patina

"Israel's Betsy Ross" on First Medal in New Series

Inspired by the United States State Quarter series, Israel is issuing medals honoring historic cities. The first city to be commemorated is Ness Ziona, meaning "Flag of Zion," taken from the Biblical verse: "Lift a flag to Zion ..." (Jeremiah 4:6).

Ness Ziona was originally established by one man, a German Christian Templer called Resler. He bought the land from Arabs and invested his money in it. However, both his wife and his children died of malaria so he decided to return to Germany. He then traveled to Odessa. There he met Reuben Lehrer in 1883 and made a barter deal. Resler would exchange his land in Palestine - 1500 dunams (350 acres) - for Lehrer's land in Odessa. Lehrer, an Orthodox Jew, motivated by religious Zionist feelings, felt this was a message from God to come to Palestine. In "Nachalat Reuben," the family grew grapes and almonds, became beekeepers, and were the first Jews in Palestine to use a modern system of agricultural production.

Michael Halperin, born in Riga, came with money plus leadership qualities matching Reuben's. He bought 200 dunams and decided to build a moshava (a settlement). Halperin also organized a group of horse riders, then the only method of travel. One night, he sat on his horse near the bonfire where speeches were being made, drew his sword, struck his right hand until blood flowed, and followed by his horsemen, jumped over the bonfire reciting "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may my right hand lose its cunning!" To the cheers of the crowd he produced a white flag with blue stripes bearing the Star of David, under which, embroidered in gold, was written "Ness Ziona." Hoisting it on high, he then planted it firmly in the earth and named the settlement "Ness Ziona - Flag of Zion."

Michael Halperin took his flag to the First Zionist Congress in Basel in 1897, and offered it as the official Zionist flag with "Ness Ziona" deleted. It became a proud symbol of freedom and in 1948 was officially adopted by the State of Israel as the national flag. Today, the flag bearing the Star of David on a blue and white prayer shawl stands beside the original house of Reuben Lehrer on Derech Yavne Street in Ness Ziona.

The Ness Ziona medals feature Michael Halperin on a horse, with his flag waving above, along with the seal of the city. The common reverse of all the medals in the series depicts an urban landscape, the menorah-emblem of Israel, and the logo of the Union of Local Authorities in Israel.

Medals are available to AINA members and IGCAMC subscribers at reduced prices: bronze (39mm., 26.8 gm., in gift-pack, limited to 3,000) at \$33 (list price \$50); silver (39mm., 31.1 gm., .999 fine, in gift-pack, limited to 500) at \$85 (list price \$105); and gold (30.5mm., 17 gm., 14kt., limited to 120) at \$666 (list price \$835). Collectors wanting a complete set pay only \$33, \$75 and \$629 respectively and will receive a free album to house the entire collection. Shipping is \$10 for the first order and free for future delivery for standing orders of complete collections. Checks or credit card information should be sent to the Israel Government Coins and Medals Corp., PO Box 7900, Jerusalem 91078, Israel or go to www.isragift.co.il.



Jewish History in Ukmerge

Ukmerge was a major Jewish community in Lithuania, and in 1923 the Jewish population was 3,885, 37.5% of the total population. It was noted for its secondary school, the Vilkomir Reali School which provided instruction in Yiddish.

The Jewish community of Ukmerge is first mentioned in a document of 1685. In the census of 1766, 716 Jews were counted there, and by 1847 their number had risen to 3758, the majority of them engaged in commerce and crafts including tanning. The community of Ukmerge was renowned for its conservatism. The community continued to develop and by the 1880's the number of Jews reached 10,000. A period of decline followed, however, when the town was bypassed by the railroads which were built at that time. In May 1915 the Jews were expelled from Ukmerge, together with those in Kovno. After the war many Jews returned. A yeshivah ketannah(preparatory yeshivah) was established as well as two secondary schools for Hebrew and Yiddish.

With the annexation of Lithuania to the Soviet Union in 1940, religious and nationalist Jewish life was systematically destroyed. A year later, Ukmerge fell into the hands of the Germans. On September 18, 1941, the remaining Jews in Ukmerge, together with those of the neighboring towns, were assembled in the nearby forest and massacred. In Ukmerge there is also a mass-grave of 10239 Jews, murdered on September 5, 1941.

For several decades now Jews have been gathering in the Pivonija pine forest near Ukmerge on the first Sunday in Sept. to pay tribute to their families, friends and neighbors who were killed at the end of Aug. - beginning of Sept. 1941. This year the members of the small Ukmerge Jewish community gathered in the Pivonija woods on Sept. 4. They were joined by chairman of the Lithuanian Jewish Community Dr. Simonas Alperavičius, members of the Vilnius Jewish community, Jews from Israel and the USA whose families were murdered here, townspeople, and pupils from the Dukstyna secondary school, led by co-ordinator of the school Tolerance Center, teacher Vida Pulkauninkienė.

The quiet sunny day was disturbed at 12 noon by the sound of a great many car horns all beeping at the same time. The horrible prolonged din was a reminder of the victims, who seemed to rise from the long, weed-covered trenches lying between the hundred-year old pines. The echo of the horns traveled throughout the entire forest, where innocent people had been killed on just such a clear morning 64 years earlier, and thrown into the deep, 20-30 metre long ditches.

Kaddish and Yizkor were spoken, and flowers, wreaths and lit candles were placed at the gravesite and monument. On that day the Jews from Ukmerge who survived the Holocaust, and their descendants throughout the world lit candles of remembrance and sadness.

Today the Jewish population of Ukmerge amounts to 30 people. The Jewish Community of Ukmerge has been reestablished in 1989. Community's main aims are: preservation and cultivation of the Jewish cultural and religious legacy, strengthening identity, providing help to the needy Ukmerge Jews.

A Lithuanian Jewish bank check from Ukmerge illustrates this article. Note the symbol of two hands clasped in friendship with Yiddish text imprinted on the check.



The First Dated Jewish Coin

By David Hendin

The first dated Jewish Royal coins were struck by Alexander Jannaeus, King and High Priest, from 103 to 76 BCE.

These coins are of the half-prutah designs of anchor and star. For centuries the inscriptions on these coins were not understood. But in 1968, Joseph Naveh deciphered the reverse Aramaic inscription around the star motif, and recognized that not only did Jannaeus' mint have a date placed on the obverse of these coins in Greek letters, but also on the reverse.

Naveh was able to recognize that what was previously thought to be an "imitation of inscription" was actually an inscription in square Aramaic letters. These are the same style letters used to write modern Hebrew (just as Latin letters are used to write modern English).

The transliteration of this Aramaic is "Malkah Alexandros Shnat Koph Heh," and the translation is "King Alexander, Year 25." This Aramaic inscription often contains errors and is almost never complete. (By the way, a RARE variation of this type actually carries the inscription in ancient Hebrew script, see Meshorer, Treasury L17.)

On the obverse of these coins is an anchor within a circle. Around the circle, also in crude style and invariably incomplete, is the Greek legend "Of King Alexander." On some of the coins there are crude letters, often comprised of dots, at the points of the anchor (when it is upside down) that read L KE. Both L KE in Greek and "kophheh" in Aramaic or Hebrew represent the letter 25, hence, the "Year 25." Since the reign of Jannaeus began in 103 BCE, his twenty-five year corresponds to the year 78 BCE.

Many experts believe that this dated coin type was probably struck after the larger, prutah-sized anchor- star coin (Hendin-469), but before the very crude and even smaller irregular leptons such as Hendin 472. This seems to tell us that the larger prutah coins were struck in or before 78 BCE, and the smaller leptons were struck later. Since Jannaeus ruled only until 76 BCE and the small crude lepton types are extremely numerous, they may have been struck over a number of years during the reign of Salome Alexandra, Jannaeus' widow. She remained queen of the Jewish people, even while there was no king, but her son Hyrcanus II held the title of "High Priest" until 40 BCE.

Coincidentally, these three types of anchor and star coin types-the prutah, the dated lepton, and the crude leptons-are all generally

considered to be candidates for the coin discussed as the "poor widow's mite" discussed in Mark 12:41-44:

"And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and he held how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did. cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had..." Because it seems that Mark was making a point that the widow cast in "two mites, which make a farthing" it suggests a very small form of currency.

Arguments can be made „to describe any of these three coins as "widow's mite" types. Most attention seems to be focused on the very small, later crude coins, because they were the smallest coins struck at the time, along with some much more scarce leptons of Herod the Great.

From various archaeological excavations in Israel, including those at Sepphoris where I participated, it is well known that the crude, tiny coins of Jannaeus continued to circulate well into and even throughout the first century in the ancient Holy Land, where, it seems, that small change was always at a premium.

Copyright @ 2008
by David Hendin



The double-dated lepton of Alexander Jannaeus, struck in 78 BCE (Hendin 471). Enlarged photo courtesy of the author.

PROFILE OF A CANADIAN AINA MEMBER

Marvin Kay was born and raised in Toronto, Canada and still resides there. Marvin and his wife Sondra recently celebrated 50 years of marriage. They have three adult children. They enjoy spending as much time as possible at their country retreat in Muskoka.

Marvin attended Allenby Public School followed by North Toronto Collegiate Institute where he graduated with honours. In 1951 he entered the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto. After two years of pre-meds, Marvin spent four years in medical school, graduating in 1957. Following a year of a rotating internship at New Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto, Marvin had become interested in anesthesiology and was soon accepted at Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center in New York City where he had a two-year residency (1958-1960).

Upon his return to Toronto to do more training, Marvin spent six months as a Senior Intern in Medicine at Sunnybrook Hospital and six months as Resident in Anesthesiology at the Hospital for Sick Children. Prior to his first full-time position on staff at St. Michaels Hospital and Doctor's Hospital, Marvin had served another year in training as Resident in Anesthesiology at Toronto General Hospital. It was during this time Marvin was exposed to the field of dental surgery. Numerous dental surgery resident doctors invited Marvin to assist them in their offices with hard-to-handle patients. This in turn developed into a full-time traveling dental office anesthesiology practice for Marvin, necessitating his stepping away from any full-time hospital appointments. To date, Dr. Kay has administered over 23,000 anesthetics to dental patients in the offices of over 200 different dentists.

Marvin has been a numismatist for over 50 years, specializing in coins, tokens, medals and banknotes that depict the field of medicine. He has over 400 different pieces in his collection showing physicians, nurses, pharmacists, dentists, veterinarians and hospitals. Marvin is a member of the Canadian Numismatic Association, AINA, and numerous local organizations. In 1984, Marvin made Canadian numismatic history when he organized the first Canada-Israel Numismatic tour, leading a group of twenty Canadian and American collectors to the Holy Land.

Marvin has written numerous numismatic articles for the CNA Journal, the Medical Post, The Canadian Antiquer, the Bulletin of the Philippine Collector's Society, the TAMS Bulletin, and the Numismatist, as well as for the Toronto daily newspaper, the Globe and Mail. He is the only Canadian in recent years to receive both the Heath Literary Award from the ANA and the Guy Potter Literary Award from the CNA.

Marvin has served as chairman of several committees and as an officer in the CNA. He served as 2nd vice president and as chairman of the awards committee, and later became the 1st vice-president and chairman of the editorial committee. In 1993, Marvin became the 22nd president of the CNA, the first physician to hold that office. He is also a past president of the Toronto Coin Club and was very active in the INS of Toronto (this was when I first met Dr. Kay). In 1996, Marvin received the Award of Merit, the highest award of the Ontario Numismatic Association, and in 2003, he was declared a Fellow of the CNA (FCNA), as recognition of his continuing efforts on behalf of the CNA and the future of numismatics.

Written by Donna J. Sims, NLG



History of the Jews in Alytus

Alytus or Alite (as was called in Yiddish) is located in the southwestern part of Lithuania on the shores of the Neman (Nemunas) river about 360 km from its estuary into the Kurish Gulf (Kursiu Marios), the Bay of the Baltic Sea and about 60 km south of Kaunas.

The town was built on both sides of the river, and a bridge linked both parts. In documents of the fourteenth century Alytus was already mentioned as a village. In 1377 the German Crusader Order conquered Alytus, murdered a part of its population and destroyed tens of villages in its vicinity. In 1392 large battles between the Germans and the Poles broke out in the area..

In 1581 Alytus obtained the rights of a town (Magdeburg rights). In 1775 the regional courts from Troki (Trakai) and Meretch (Merkine) were transferred an event which contributed to its development and to the increase of its population. The "Hansa" merchants, who arranged storehouses with salt on the shores of the river would also pass through the town.

Until 1795 Alytus was part of the Polish-Lithuanian Kingdom, when the third division of Poland by the three superpowers of those times Russia, Prussia and Austria - caused Lithuania to become partly Russian and partly Prussian. The part of the state which lay on the left side of the Neman river (Nemunas) was handed over to Prussia while the other part became a part of Russia. So the right side was ruled by Russia and the left side by Prussia who ruled there during the years 1795-1807.

After Napoleon defeated Prussia and according to the Tilzit agreement of July 1807, Polish territories occupied by Prussia were transferred to what became known as the "The Great Dukedom of Warsaw", which was established at that time. The king of Sachsonia, Friedrich-August, was appointed duke, and the Napoleonic code now became the constitution of the dukedom, according to which everybody was equal before the law, except for the Jews who were not granted any civil rights.

During the years 1807-1813, Alytus belonged to the "Great Dukedom of Warsaw" and was part of the Bialystok district. The Napoleonic Codex was then introduced in this region, remaining in effect even during the Lithuanian period. In 1915 all Lithuania was annexed to Russia.

In 1909 as a result of a great fire most of the town's houses burnt down. In the years of independent Lithuania (1918-1940) both parts of

Alytus were united into one district town. The railroad to Vilna and Suvalk were cut off after Poland occupied the Vilna region. Instead the Lithuanian government built a railroad that connected at Kazlu-Ruda to the main line Kaunas- Virbalis (Kybartai). All the governmental and educational institutions were located in the western part of the town.

During the Nazi rule, 1941-1944, the Germans and their Lithuanian collaborators murdered tens of thousands Soviet war prisoners and thousands civilians, among them all the Jewish population of Alytus and the surrounding towns.

The Jewish community of Alytus was one of the oldest in Lithuania. According to a list of taxpayers of 1765 there were 360 Jews who paid Head Taxes. In 1847 their number decreased to 262. In 1897 there were 482 Jews in town, 33.6% of the total population. The Jews made their living from small commerce, barrooms and providing services to the many soldiers that were stationed in the barracks in the vicinity. Several Jewish families had large farms and made their living from agriculture.

The Jewish community of Alytus was one of the pioneer communities organizing its life according to the Autonomy Law regarding the minorities issued by the new Lithuanian government. Already in July 1919 a Community Committee of 11 members was elected in town. There were then 1,100 Jewish men 425 among them had voting rights and 358 actually voted. 3 Orthodox, 3 Zionists, 3 Workers and 2 Mizrahi members were elected to the Committee. The Committee was active in all fields of Jewish life until annulment of Autonomy at the end of 1925.

Due to the Government's agrarian reform the lands of Jewish farm owners were taken away, and only a few continued to grow vegetables and tend orchards. Many Jews were suppliers for the army stationed in town. Fresh air, pine forests and the Neman River attracted holiday guests in summer which added to the income of many Jewish families in town. In 1937 there were 61 Jewish artisans in Alytus 9 tailors, 8 bakers, 8 butchers, 6 hatters, 5 carpenters, 4 tinsmiths, 4 barbers, 2 blacksmiths, 2 shoemakers, 2 painters, 1 oven builder, 1 glazier, 1 bookbinder, 1 locksmith, 1 cord maker, 1 corset maker, 1 photographer, 1 watchmaker, 1 tailor, 1 laundry worker and 1 other worker.

The Jewish Folksbank had two branches in both parts of the town and played an important role in the town's economic life. There was a private bank as well owned by Yosef Marshak. In the middle of the thirties the economic situation of Alytus Jews started to decline due to the open propaganda of the Lithuanian Merchant Association-Verslas-

propagating against buying at Jewish stores. To achieve their goal the Lithuanians established consumer cooperatives (Lietukis). As a result of this propaganda anti Jewish outburst began to occur in many places. In April 1932, 21 tombstones at the Jewish cemetery were desecrated .

World War II started with the German invasion of Poland September 1, 1939, and its consequences for Lithuanian Jews in general and Alytus Jews in particular were felt several months later. In agreement with the Ribbentrop-Molotov treaty on the division of occupied Poland, the Russians occupied the Suvalk region, but after delineation of exact borders between Russia and Germany the Suvalk region fell into German hands. The retreating Russians allowed anyone who wanted to join them to move into their occupied territory, and indeed many young people left the area together with the Russians. The Germans drove the remaining Jews out of their homes in Suvalk and its vicinity, robbed them of their possessions, then directed them to the Lithuanian border, where they were left in dire poverty. The Lithuanians did not allow them to enter Lithuania and the Germans did not allow them to return. Thus they stayed in this swampy area in cold and rain for several weeks, until Jewish youths from the border villages smuggled them into Lithuania by various routes, with much risk to themselves. Altogether about 2,400 refugees passed through the border or infiltrated on their own, and were then dispersed in the "Suvalkia" region.

On March 19, 1993 a new metal monument was inaugurated in the Vidzgiris forest in the shape of a broken "Magen-David". The nine large graves in which the bones of the murdered Jews were buried, were covered with a round black cover and on it there is a white pyramid. Near the path that leads to the hill a memorial plaque was erected that tells the story of the massacre in Yiddish and Lithuanian: **"Here, in this place, the Nazis and their local helpers, in the years 1941-1944, murdered tens thousands of Jews-children, women, men and old people, most of them from other countries. Let their memory last forever"**. The architect of the site was Mrs.R.Vasiliauskiene and the sculptor - A. Smilingis. A picture of the broken Star of David is on the front cover of this issue.

The illutration if of a rare bank check from the Jewish bank in Alytus

The Jews of Trinidad

The Jewish presence in Trinidad is at once constant and invisible. There have been several waves of Jewish immigration to this most Southern island of the Caribbean archipelago, yet each one has largely been forgotten by the populace, and few reminders exist in the society of their past and continuing presence.

The first major Jewish immigration to Trinidad was in the late 1700's and today many last names on the island are living testaments to their presence. However, today none of the descendants of these early immigrants are currently Jewish, and the vast majority are not even aware of their Jewish heritage, a testimony to the high degree of intermarriage between the Jews and the Catholic French of Trinidad in the last two centuries.

In the late 1800's, another group of Jews made their way to Trinidad, mostly Portuguese in origin although a few also came from Curacao. Many of these also assimilated and/or intermarried. Official records show that at the turn of the 20th Century, the number of Jews on the island numbered just 31 and all were English in origin. They worked mostly as civil servants and as merchants. One of these, Sir Nathaniel Nathan, served as Associate Justice of The Trinidad Supreme Court from 1893 to 1900 and Chief Justice from 1900 to 1903.

However, The 20th Century would see a rapid rise and equally rapid fall in the numbers of the Jewish population in Trinidad. Of the thousands of Jews who fled Nazism, many found a haven in the Caribbean. From 1936 to 1939, Trinidad was the most welcoming beacon as it had no visa requirement, only a £50 landing deposit. New arrivals were quickly settled in houses rented by a Jewish aid society in the capital, Port of Spain.

Most of the refugees knew very little about the Caribbean before their arrival. As a result, the adjustment was often quite challenging. But it did not take long for the new arrivals to establish small businesses. In the island's two main towns, Port of Spain and San Fernando, new cafes, factories, and shops started to appear.

By 1939, the Jewish community numbered 600. Concerned, colonial authorities enacted a temporary ban on immigration from "specified" European countries. There also existed a sense of ambivalence about the Jewish presence amongst the local population. However, these feelings were more rooted in intense competition for

scarce economic resources, among the generally impoverished population, than in anti-Semitism and the new immigrants experienced no real expressions of hostility.

As they created new economic niches for themselves in their "Calypso Shtetl", "The Calypso Jews", as they now saw themselves, began to turn their attentions to creating a cultural and religious life for themselves on the island. A synagogue and community center were founded in a rented house on Duke Street in Port of Spain (Today one of its Torah scrolls can be found at Congregation Dorshei Emet in Montreal.). There were aid societies for the poor and elderly, and even a dramatic and opera society. Although the community was refused a license for kosher slaughter it was granted a separate section (Bet Olam) of Port of Spain's main cemetery, The Mucurapo Cemetery. Today the cemetery is maintained by the island's only remaining member of this 1930's influx, Hans Stecher. He and his family, left Vienna for Trinidad shortly after the Anschluß when Nazi Germany annexed Austria. There is hope to establish a fund that can relieve him of this responsibility and to ensure the section's perpetual upkeep.

Unfortunately, the relative stability and bliss which the refugees had settled into was not to last. With the outbreak of war, all refugees deemed to be "enemy aliens" were interned in camps throughout the Caribbean. Trinidad was no exception. In addition to captured Italian and German merchant seamen and German U-boat crews, Trinidad's new "enemy aliens" now included, ironically those Jewish families who came from Austria or Germany.

While an internment camp was being constructed outside of the capital, the Jewish families were housed in barracks on tiny islands off the mainland (Hans Stecher still has a shark's fin saved from the shore during his time on the island.). After a few months in the barracks they were moved back to the mainland. The internment camp, which stood on what are now the residential neighborhoods of Federation Park and Ellerslie Park, is documented at Trinidad's Chaguaramas Military Museum and was surrounded by a tall barbed wire fence with sentry towers and search lights. Although children were given special permissions to attend school outside the camp, understandably, many of the refugees felt deeply insulted by this course of events.

In 1943, they were released with certain wartime restrictions. They had to report daily to the nearest police station, were banned from driving cars or riding bicycles, and were under curfew from 8:00 P.M. to 6:00 A.M.. In disgust, some families left. Others stayed and brought back

to light the community life they had started before internment. A soccer team was established, the drama club performed plays in Hebrew and Yiddish, they held fund-raisers for Israel, and a schochet was even brought in from The United States. The community was, in a word, vibrant. As the children grew however, the viability of the community was undermined since there was no local university at the time. Once the children went overseas to study few returned to live. Of those who did, many intermarried or assimilated and the community gradually began to dissolve after it reached its peak of 700 people by The Mid 1900's.

In the 1970's, Trinidad's political and social stability was threatened by a wave of "Black Power" riots. Fearing for their safety, and haunted by bad memories, the majority of the remaining population migrated en masse. Many created new roots in Canada where they remain to this day. Today, pictures and memories are all that remain of "The Calypso Shtetl". It is hard to believe that at one time Passover Seders were so large they were sometimes hosted at The Trinidad Hilton.

Religious artifacts were moved to Barbados in the 1970's to ensure their safety. Currently the Torah scroll resides at Congregation Dorshei Emet in Montreal.

Still, if one looks around, one can find evidence of this brief renaissance of Jewish life in Trinidad. Most notably on every police car, policeman, and police station on the island, is the insignia of the police force which is a hummingbird within a Magen David. A British commander who came to Trinidad from Palestine put a white star against a blue background for the local army symbol, switching the colors of what was to become The Israeli Flag. The hummingbird was later added for local flavor. This makes Trinidad unique in that it is the only police service in The World that does not use its country's Coat of Arms as its official symbol.

Today Bet Olam is still the Jewish section of The Mucurapo Cemetery and there is also a smaller cemetery in San Fernando. There are also places named Albert Einstein Avenue, Theodore Herzl Drive, and Golda Meir Gardens. There are also places that bear the names of local Jews.

Today the community numbers 25-67, depending on who you talk to and who is on the island at any one point, and holds occasional communal observances. Projects are in the works to revitalise the community including the formation of an organizational body.

The illustration is of a rare \$2.00 note of Trinidad and Tobago which was issued in 1939



THE JEWISH TEDDY BEAR

From The American Jewish Historical Society

Recently, an English teacher in the Sudan was jailed and threatened to be killed for allowing her eight year old pupils to name the class mascot teddy bear Mohammed. To avoid international controversy the president of the Sudan pardoned her and she was quickly put on a plane back to England. Islamic culture forbids naming objects after the prophet.

Teddy bears are a symbol of cuddly gentleness and security the world over. It is well known that the teddy bear is named for President Theodore Roosevelt. Less well known are the inventors of the teddy bear, Rose and Morris Michtom, two Russian Jewish immigrants who lived in Brooklyn.

The American bear as a symbol of gentleness is filled with ironies. For generations, bears prompted fear, not affection. The teddy bear's namesake, Theodore Roosevelt, was a ferocious warrior and big game hunter – a man who killed for sport. However, an unlikely alliance between the rugged, native-born American Protestant president and the inventive, immigrant Jewish couple from Brooklyn created one of the most lovable and enduring American icons.

The story begins in 1902. The states of Mississippi and Louisiana disagreed over the location of their common boundary, which bisected some of the least well-developed land in the United States. The governors of both states invited President Roosevelt to arbitrate the dispute. Roosevelt decided to combine his tour of the disputed territory with a five-day black bear hunt.

The president's foray attracted a large contingent of journalists, who reported on Roosevelt's every move. Even more compelling to the reporters than the boundary dispute was the president's pursuit of a trophy bear. For four days, the press reported little about Roosevelt's arbitration of the boundary dispute and harped on the ability of the area's bears to elude his crosshairs. On the fifth and last day of the junket, apparently to redeem the president's reputation, one of his hunting companions caught and tied a bear cub to a tree so that the president could shoot it. When he came upon the cub, Roosevelt refused to kill it, saying that he only took prey that had a sporting chance to defend itself.

Roosevelt's demurrer took the nation by storm. The leading American cartoonist, Clifford Berryman, published a cartoon showing Roosevelt turning his back on the young bear, tied by its neck, and public response to the president's self-restraint was overwhelmingly favorable.



The illustration is from the Franklin Mint Presidential Series

The next day, the *Washington Post* published a second cartoon, depicting the bear as a more placid beast, cementing the docile image of the young bear even more firmly in the public imagination.

Enter the Michtoms. Morris had arrived penniless in New York in 1887, when only in his teens, a refugee from pogroms. He married Rose and opened a small store that sold notions, candy and other penny items. In the evening, to help make ends meet, Rose sewed toys that they sold in the shop. Like millions of other Americans, the Michtoms avidly followed press accounts of Roosevelt's journey into the Louisiana backcountry. Roosevelt's refusal to shoot the defenseless bear touched the Michtoms. Morris suggested to Rose that she sew a replica of the bear represented in Berryman's cartoons.

That night, Rose cut and stuffed a piece of plush velvet into the shape of a bear, sewed on shoe button eyes and handed it to Morris to display in the shop window. He labeled it, "Teddy's bear." To his surprise, not only did someone enter the store asking to buy the bear, but twelve other potential customers also asked to purchase it. Aware that he might offend the president by using his name without permission, the Michtoms mailed the original bear to the White House, offering it as a gift to the president's children and asking Roosevelt for the use of his name. He told the Michtoms he doubted his name would help its sales but they were free to use it if they wanted.

The rest is an amazing – yet characteristic – American Jewish immigrant success story. The Michtoms sewed teddy bears and placed them in the window of their shop, but demand was so great they couldn't keep up. The couple concluded that there was more profit in teddy bears than in penny candy and dedicated full time to producing them. Because of the doll's popularity, Roosevelt and the Republican Party adopted it as their symbol in the election of 1904, and Michtom bears were placed on display at every public White House function.

The Michtoms' labor grew into the Ideal Toy Company, which remained in family hands until the 1970s. Ideal Toys sold millions of teddies throughout the world; yet, their good fortune did not spoil the Michtoms. Ever mindful of their humble origins, they supported the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, the Jewish National Fund, the National Labor Campaign for Palestine and numerous other Jewish causes. While Ideal Toys could not secure a patent on the teddy bear and many imitators entered the market, the Michtoms created an American – and worldwide— icon. Their original teddy bear, treasured and saved by Teddy Roosevelt's grandchildren, is now displayed at the Smithsonian.

Jewish Legion

Israel Freedom Fighter Medal

The first Jewish Legion was organized by the great Zeev Jabotinsky and Joseph Trumpeldor in Egypt, during World War I in March 1915 and fought in Gallipoli.

The Second or Royal Fusilliers was formed in London in August 1917 and helped drive the Turks out of Israel.

The Third Jewish Legion of Zionist pioneers fought the Nazis in Europe in World War II.

The Fourth Jewish Legion of Volunteers from the United States, Europe, Russia, Canada and Latin America was formed in October 2000 in Samaria on the outset of the Oslo War. Its function is to guard the smaller Jewish villages. Jewish Legions work is praised by local Israel army officers and leaders. People consider volunteers as heroes who save lives. On the other hand, arab terrorists and their supporters rant bitterly. Misguided bureaucrats of the Clinton State Dept put the Legion on the terrorist list.

This medal was coined at the start of the Oslo War in September 2000 for foreign volunteers in Gedud Halvri/Jewish Legion, an Israeli army auxiliary units in Judea, Samaria. Jewish Legion. Local IDF commanders in Central Samaria have documented five separate occasions when the Jewish Legion volunteers with their superbly trained K-9 units prevented attacks on civilians

Jewish Legion from October 2000 to this day remains the only assistance program from American Jews to the front line anti-terrorist defense of Israel. Used by the Jewish Defense League in the United States, Kach and Kahane Chai Movements in Israel and America. The medal features a fist within the Jewish Star which was the symbol of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. It was found on one of the walls of the Warsaw Ghetto in 1945. Kach and Kahane were outlawed in Israel by the leftish regime and the symbol is illegal there. ShaBak actually confiscated such medals, interrogated and imprisoned bearers and brought criminal charges in the Israel Court system.

Inscribed Bitahon Israel in Hebrew, Jewish Defense in English and self defense in Russian on the obverse. The reverse contains a verse from Psalms 149.6 in Hebrew and English translation below.



The Proskurov Massacre

Proskurov is a Russian town, in the government of Podolia. The Jewish community there had one large and eight smaller synagogues, and a Talmud Torah built by the late Hayyim Masel in memory of his father, Phinehas. The expenses of the Talmud Torah were met by a grant of 3,000 rubles annually from the income of the meat-tax. There was also a Jewish school for boys and one for girls, a library, founded by the Zionists, and various other institutions.

Following Czar Nicholas II's abdication in February 1917, the Russian Empire endured several years of revolutionary conflict and civil war. In numerous parts of the country, nationalist movements emerged which tried to establish independent governments in the wake of the empire's collapse. The Baltic states, for example, gained their independence, which lasted for two decades until the Nazi-Soviet pact led to their forceful incorporation into Stalin's Soviet Union. In Georgia, a Menshevik government enjoyed a short-lived existence before succumbing to pressure from Moscow in 1921.

As many as 3.5 million Jews lived in the empire, constituting about 8% of the population. Relations between Jews and the bulk of the Ukrainian population, most of whom were peasants, had often been tense. As far back as 1648, the Ukrainian peasant leader Bohdan Khmel'nyts'kyi had led a rebellion against Polish rule that left hundreds of thousands of Jews dead because they were perceived as agents of Polish economic domination. This was only the first of several notorious pogroms.

For the Jews, in particular, World War I and the ensuing years of civil war turned into an extended nightmare. German and Austrian authorities were hostile to Jews during their occupation of large parts of Ukraine. The Russian Imperial Army also dealt harshly with them, expelling a half million from their homes in 1915.

But the worst was yet to come. For several years, Ukraine endured a period of unparalleled political turmoil, collapsing into a state of complete anarchy, in which no party ever exercised complete control over the nation. From the time of the czar's abdication until February 1919, the town of Proskurov experienced even greater turmoil; sixteen governments played political leap-frog in the period between February 1917 and January 1921, when the Bolsheviks took control.

It was during these years, particularly from 1918 to 1920, that a series of vicious pogroms were carried out by various military units and peasant gangs, overwhelming Jewish towns and villages, killing tens of

thousands, and further poisoning Ukrainian-Jewish relations.

The Central Rada lasted from March 1917 until April 1918, when a German puppet state began its own brief existence. At first, its leaders sought a degree of autonomy from the Provisional Government that had come to power after the czar's abdication. Then, after the Bolshevik takeover, they declared full independence. At the same time, Ukrainian leaders worked with several Jewish political parties in an attempt to create a society in which Ukrainians and Jews could live together. Under the banner of Autonomism, Ukrainian intellectuals like Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi championed the idea of "harmonious cooperation with national minorities, especially Jews." This meant the "recognition of nationality rights as well as personal rights," a move designed to reassure Jews and others that as individuals and as distinct communities, they would have a secure place in an independent Ukraine.

For a time, the Central Rada took concrete and useful initiatives. A Ministry of Jewish Affairs was established, a step no other government had taken before. Headed by the socialist activist Moshe Zilberfarb, the ministry tried to nurture a more coherent infrastructure for the Jewish community and respond to individual appeals for assistance. The Central Rada also authorized the revitalization of the *kehilas*, or local units of Jewish self-government, which Czar Nicholas I had virtually banned in 1844. In response to the Bolshevik advance on Kiev, the Ukrainian military declared martial law and "issued a decree expelling all inhabitants who had not been registered before January 1, 1915." This would have affected nearly three out of every four Jews in the city. Happily, Zilberfarb was able to persuade the military to rescind this decree.

Nonetheless, during its brief existence, it does not seem that the ministry had a tremendous impact on the lives of ordinary Jews in Ukraine. Yiddish was made an official language; this was a thoughtful gesture, but the Central Rada was not in a position to give substance to this status. Yiddish-only speakers could not converse with government officials and the telephone service had no Yiddish-speaking operators. Callers were asked to speak in Russian or Ukrainian.

Proskurov was one of the major towns in the province of Podolia, its total population was about 50,000, of which nearly 25,000 were Jews. To be sure, there were Jews among the local Bolshevik units, just like there were Jews in the Petlura government.

Ten days before the pogrom, a brigade of Cossacks and a regiment of Gaidamaks commanded by the Ataman Semosenko, in the

name of Petlura arrived in Proskurov and informed the municipal government that he was assuming local authority. Semosenko plied the Gaidamaks with vodka and cognac, exhorted them that the most dangerous enemies of the Ukrainian people and the Cossacks were the Jews. He demanded an oath that the Cossacks fulfill their sacred duty to exterminate the Jewish population, but not to destroy property. Later that same day, the carnage was accomplished efficiently in three hours and, true to their word, the Gaidamaks cut down without mercy, but did not loot. Roughly 1,500 of Proskurov's Jews were killed within about three hours.

The next morning an emergency meeting of the municipal council was called. Semosenko spoke and vowed to continue to massacre the Jews, who he claimed were all Bolsheviks and had plotted to kill the Cossacks. At this point, one brave voice was raised in protest. Verkhola, a member of the council who had only escaped from prison in Tarnopol two days earlier, delivered a long speech in which he declared that the events in Proskurov were a disgrace to Ukraine. Speaking of the past good services of the Cossacks, he declared that Semosenko had clothed thugs in the uniforms of Cossacks and made himself their chief. Turning to Semosenko he said: "You are fighting Bolsheviks; but were these old men and children Bolsheviks whom your Gaidamaks cut down? You assert that only Jews produce Bolsheviks; but do you not know that there are Bolsheviks among other nations, too, including the Ukrainians?"

The municipal council supported Verkhola's demand that the mass murders stop; indeed, only sporadic killings occurred in Proskurov during the next few days. After the Proskurov debacle, Semosenko was forced to resign his leadership. Later, he was arrested and tried; witnesses described him as a weak young man of 22 or 23 who was "half-witted, nervous and unbalanced." Semosenko was executed in May 1920.

The illustration is of a one mark Cooperative of Proskurov Jewish Community Council note. It is printed in Yiddish and was issued during the time when the Central Rada government was in existence.



60th Anniversary Lodz Ghetto Medal



This gold plated medal was minted in 2004 to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the extermination of the Jewish in the Lodz Ghetto in 1944. The obverse side: The 20 Mark from the Lodz Ghetto. Reverse: The coat of arms of the city of Lodz; the inscription in Polish – “The 60th Anniversary of the Liquidation of the Lodz Ghetto; the dates 1944 - 2004 diameter - 38 mm (1½”) weight – 31.20, (1.10 oz)

The Łódź Ghetto (historically the Litzmannstadt Ghetto) was the second-largest ghetto (after the Warsaw Ghetto) established for Jews and Roma in German-occupied Poland. Situated in the town of Łódź and originally intended as a temporary gathering point for Jews, the ghetto was transformed into a major industrial center, providing much needed supplies for Nazi Germany and especially for the German Army. Because of its remarkable productivity, the ghetto managed to survive until August 1944, when the remaining population was transported to Auschwitz. It was the last ghetto in Poland to be liquidated.

When German forces occupied Łódź in September 1939, the city had a population of 672,000 people, over one-third of them (233,000) Jews. Łódź was annexed directly to the Warthegau region of the Reich and renamed Litzmannstadt. As such, the city was to undergo a process of Aryanization: the Jewish population was to be expelled to the *Generalgouvernement* and the Polish population was to be reduced significantly and transformed into a slave labor force.

First mention of the establishment of a ghetto appears in an order dated 10 December 1939, which spoke of a temporary gathering point for local Jews to ease the deportation process. By 1 October 1940, the deportation was to have been completed, and the city was to have been *Judenrein* (free of Jews).

The peculiar situation of the Łódź Ghetto prevented any manifestations of armed resistance, which have become synonymous with the final days of the Warsaw Ghetto, Vilna Ghetto, Białystok Ghetto, and other ghettos in Nazi-occupied Poland. Rumkowski's overbearing autocracy, the failure of attempts to smuggle food--and consequently, arms--into the ghetto, and the conviction that productivity would ensure survival precluded any attempts at armed revolt.

Nevertheless, Swiss sociologist Werner Rings identified four distinct forms of resistance that civilian populations engaged in throughout Nazi-occupied Europe, with offensive resistance constituting the final form of resistance. The other three categories: symbolic, polemic, and defensive, can all be found in the ghetto, and there are even indications of offensive resistance in terms of sabotage.

Symbolic resistance is evident in the rich cultural and religious life that was maintained in the ghetto throughout the early years. Initially, there were 47 schools and day care facilities in the ghetto, which continued to operate despite the harshest conditions. When the school buildings were converted to living space to house the 20,000 Jewish families transported to the ghetto from Central Europe, alternatives frameworks were established, particularly for younger children whose mothers were forced to work. In addition to educating the young, schools attempted to ensure that children received proper nourishment despite the meager rations they were allotted. After the schools were shut down in 1941, many of the *ressorts* continued to maintain illegal daycare centers for children whose mothers were working.

Political organizations also continued to exist in the ghetto, and even engaged in strikes when rations were cut. In one instance, a strike got so out of hand that the German police were called upon to suppress it. At the same time, there was also a rich cultural life, including active theaters, concerts, and banned religious gatherings, all of which countered official attempts at dehumanization. Much information about cultural activities can be found in the ghetto archive, organized by the Judenrat to document *day-to-day* life in the ghetto.

The archive can also be considered a form of polemic resistance, intended to record life in the ghetto for future generations. The photographers of the statistical department of the Judenrat, besides their official work, illegally took photos of everyday scenes and atrocities. One of them, Henryk Ross, managed to bury the negatives and dig them up after liberation. It is because of this archive that we have a real sense of what life in the ghetto was like. Unlike many other images from that period, some of the photographs taken in the ghetto are in color,

enhancing the already vivid portrait of ghetto life. As one diarist wrote: "We must observe and protect everything with a critical eye, draw sketches of everything that occurs ..." so that they would be remembered. The archivists also began creating a ghetto encyclopedia and even a lexicon of the local slang that emerged to describe their daily lives.

Although it was illegal, the Jewish population even maintained several radios with which they were able to keep abreast of events in the outside world. At first, the radio could only receive German news broadcasts, which is why it is codenamed "Liar" in many of the diaries from that period. Among the news bulletins spread around the ghetto was the Allied invasion of Normandy on the day it occurred.

Defensive resistance in the ghetto includes avoiding the final transports and helping others to do the same. Some 900 Jews managed to survive in the ghetto from the final liquidation until the Soviets finally liberated the city. Yet even before the final deportation, members of youth movements shared meager rations with friends who refused to report for deportation, allowing them to survive even after they were no longer entitled to food rations.

Since work was essential to the ghetto's survival, it seems inevitable that sabotage was common. In the latter years, leftist workers adopted the slogan *P.P.* (*pracuj powoli*, or "go slow") to hinder their work on behalf of the *Wehrmacht*. When a bunker with Jews hiding in it was discovered, one of the people assaulted Hans Biebow, Rumkowski's direct superior in the Nazi administration.

There is evidence in diaries that some form of armed resistance was discussed in the final days of the ghetto, but it never materialized as it did in other ghettos, because of the aforementioned considerations.

Chaim Rumkowski, the leader of the Jews, believed that by cooperating with the Nazis and by producing needed war materials for the German Army, it would be possible to survive. He and his family were murdered in a death camp, though there were many Jews who would have had him killed anyway.

Aaron Isaac, The First Jew Granted Permission To Live In Sweden By Mel Wacks

While a number of Jews lived in Sweden, practicing their rituals in secret, a Jewish community was not officially established until the 1770's. Samson Efraim and his son visited Goteborg and Stockholm on business in 1702. More Jewish businessmen came to Sweden because of the demands of the East Indian Company and, in 1733, Jews were allowed to visit auctions in Goteborg and a small Jewish community of eight individuals lived in Stockholm until 1734.



Aaron Isaac was born in 1729 in Brandenburg, Germany; he had 13 siblings. Aaron began wandering around the country, trying to earn a living, after his father died when he was only 14. At the age of 45, Aaron came to Sweden and became the first person granted permission to live there as a Jew. He was initially offered citizenship if he accepted Christianity, but his response was: "I would not change my religion for all the gold in the world;" this so impressed the Lord Mayor of Stockholm, that he advised Isaac to make a legal protest to King Gustav III. The King subsequently granted him citizenship as the first Swedish Jew. Aaron was allowed to bring additional Jewish families, so there would be at least a minyon of 10 Jewish men needed to hold prayer services. These "founding fathers" purchased land, dedicated a cemetery and employed a rabbi to serve as religious leader and teacher. They also established a Chevra Kadisha (burial society) which is still functioning.

Aaron Isaac wrote his memoirs in Hebrew at the age of 72, beginning with: "For later generations, for the children of my people, so

that my memory may not be lost, that I, Aaron, the son of Rabbi Yitzhak Isaac, may his memory be for blessing, established myself in the land of Sweden. For before me, no Jew ever had the right of residence in the entire land of Sweden, until I came here and found grace in the eyes of our lord, the pious and great King Gustav III ... And may the redeemer come to Zion. Amen."

Places of settlement were unfortunately limited by the law by the "Jewish regulations of 1782." Jews could practice only a few professions and were limited in their choice of business. Initially they could live only in Stockholm, Gothenburg and Norrköping. After several revisions all limitations to full citizenship were removed by Parliament in 1870. By then, the number of Jews had increased to 3,000 through births and new immigration. Today there are about 20,000 Jews in Sweden.

Sweden was neutral during World War II. About half the Jews of Norway (500 of 1,000) found refuge there in 1940, while almost all the 7,000 Jews of Denmark were rescued in October 1943. When they received information about secret plans to arrest and deport the Jews of Denmark during the High Holy Days, the Danish underground succeeded in smuggling most of them over to Sweden by boat. The vast majority of the Danish Jews returned to Denmark after the war. During the six months between July 1944 and January 1945, tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews were saved in Budapest by a 32 year old non-Jewish Swede, Raoul Wallenberg.

For the last 17 years, the Aaron Isaac Medal has been given to prominent persons in Sweden. It is awarded either to a Jewish or non-Jewish person who has been active or encouraged Jewish life in an unselfish way for the benefit of Judaism. This award was the idea of Lena Posner-Körösi, President of the Jewish Community of Stockholm together with Ms. Annie Winblad Jakubowski, who created the medal.

The obverse of the medal features a portrait of Aaron Isaac based on an anonymous oil painting owned by the Jewish Community in Stockholm. The text on the reverse is an excerpt from *The memoirs of Aaron Isaac. A Jewish cultural picture from the Gustavianska era*: "When we came to Stockholm, he let me stand on the street beside the wagon. It was the first day in the month of Tammuz 5534 (Friday the 10th of June 1774). It was nine o'clock in the morning and it was very warm."

The most recent recipient of the Aaron Isaac Medal was the former Prime Minister of Sweden, Göran Persson who has fought against anti-Semitism and xenophobia. His commitment has led to a National

Remembrance Day and the creation of the government agency, The Living History Forum, which has been commissioned with the task of promoting issues relating to tolerance, democracy and human rights – with the Holocaust as its point of reference.

Born in 1962, medal designer Annie Winblad Jakubowski is a graduate of The City of Guilds of London Art School and the University of Arts, Crafts and Design in Sweden. She is also a graphic designer and illustrator, who currently is co-ordinating an exhibition on the history of the Jews of Sweden for the Jewish Museum in Stockholm and is a recipient of a grant from the Swedish government's Arts Grants Committee. Her work has been exhibited in the Swedish National Travelling Exhibitions, the Swedish National Theatre, and the Nordiska Museet. Ms. Jakubowski has designed Swedish commemorative coins for the 300th anniversary of the birth of nature researcher Carolus Linnaeus, the 150th anniversary of the Swedish railway, the 150th anniversary of Sweden's first postage stamp, and the 100-year anniversary of the dissolution of the Swedish-Norwegian union. You can learn more about this talented artist at www.winbladjakubowski.se.

I want to thank Annie Winblad Jakubowski and Birgitta Bredskog of the Jewish Community of Stockholm for generously assisting with this article.



Stutthof Concentration Camp

Stutthof is one of the lesser-known concentration camps. It is located in the eastern suburbs of Gdansk, Poland (formerly Danzig), in the town now known as Sztutowo, Poland. Stutthof has the dubious distinction of being the first concentration camp located outside of Germany. Initially used to hold political prisoners from the city of Danzig, it gradually came to incarcerate prisoners from further away. It remained relatively small through 1940-41, with about 12,000 prisoners.

Beginning in 1942, prisoners of various nationalities were transferred to Stutthof from other camps, such as Mauthausen and Flossenbürg. In 1943, the camp grew larger and established an extensive system of sub-camps, with prisoners primarily from Poland, but also substantial numbers from Czechoslovakia, Estonia, Latvia and elsewhere. The major influx of prisoners began in 1944, when 75,000 prisoners, mainly Hungarian and Polish Jews, were sent there. Another large number of Jewish prisoners were sent to Stutthof from Riga, Latvia. Altogether, about 120,000 individuals passed through or died in Stutthof.

The Nazi authorities of the Free City of Danzig were compiling material about known Jews as early as 1936, and also reviewing suitable places to build concentration camps in their area. Originally, Stutthof was a civilian internment camp under the Danzig police chief. In November 1941, it became a "labor education" camp, administered by the German Security Police. Finally, in January 1942, Stutthof became a regular concentration camp.

The original camp (known as the old camp) was surrounded by barbed-wire fences. It comprised eight barracks for the inmates and a "kommandantur" for the SS guards. In 1943, the camp was enlarged and a new camp was constructed alongside the earlier one. It was surrounded by electrified barbed-wire fences and contained thirty new barracks.

The camp staff consisted of SS guards and, after 1943, Ukrainian auxiliaries. In 1942 the first female prisoners and SS women arrived in Stutthof. Over 130 women served in the Stutthof complex of camps spread across the Baltic coast of Poland. Starting in June 1944, the SS in Stutthof began conscripting women from Danzig and the surrounding cities to come to Stutthof and train as camp guards because of a severe guard shortage.

A crematory and gas chamber were added in 1943, just in time to start mass executions when Stutthof was included on the "Endlösung" on June 1944. Mobile gas wagons were also used to complement the

maximum capacity of the gas chamber (150 people per execution) when needed.

Conditions in the camp were brutal. Many prisoners died in typhus epidemics that swept the camp in the winter of 1942 and again in 1944. Those whom the SS guards judged too weak or sick to work were gassed in the camp's small gas chamber. Gassing with Zyklon B gas began in June 1944. Camp doctors also killed sick or injured prisoners in the infirmary with lethal injections. More than 60,000 people died in the camp.

The evacuation of prisoners from the Stutthof camp system in northern Poland began in January 1945. When the final evacuation began, there were nearly 50,000 prisoners, the overwhelming majority of them Jews, in the Stutthof camp system. About 5,000 prisoners from Stutthof subcamps were marched to the Baltic Sea coast, forced into the water, and machine gunned. The rest of the prisoners were marched in the direction of Lauenburg in eastern Germany. They were cut off by advancing Soviet forces. The Germans forced the surviving prisoners back to Stutthof. Marching in severe winter conditions and treated brutally by SS guards, thousands died during the march.

In late April 1945, the remaining prisoners were removed from Stutthof by sea, since Stutthof was completely encircled by Soviet forces. Again, hundreds of prisoners were forced into the sea and shot. Over 4,000 were sent by small boat to Germany, some to the Neuengamme concentration camp near Hamburg, and some to camps along the Baltic coast. Many drowned along the way. Shortly before the German surrender, some prisoners were transferred to Malmö, Sweden, and released to the care of that neutral country. It has been estimated that over 25,000 prisoners, one in two, died during the evacuation from Stutthof and its subcamps.

Soviet forces liberated Stutthof on May 9, 1945, and liberated about 100 prisoners who had managed to hide during the final evacuation of the camp.

A medal has been minted in 1975 by the Polish sculptor and medals engraver Witold Tolkin, to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi Death Camp Stutthof in 1945 by the Soviet Army. The obverse pictures the monument commemorating the death in the Nazi Death Camp Stutthof. The inscription in Polish – "The Museum in Stutthof, 1975"

The reverse shows the badge of the prisoner and the names of the nations, whose member have been murdered in Stutthof.



350th Anniversary Medal of the Jewish Community in Amsterdam *by Samuel Matalon - Tel-Aviv*

This medal was issued in 1985 on the 350th anniversary of the Jewish community in Amsterdam, Holland, 1635-1985. Actually, Jews arrived in Amsterdam prior to 1635. They were Portugese merchants who came to the city about 1590. Amongst them were Marranos from Spain as well as Portugal. While they didnot wish to openly appear as Jews, the necessities of life had it's course. Slowly they built a synagogue, a Jewish burial ground, a Jewish school, and even a Jewish prnting house was founded by Menashe Ben Israel in 1626. Nine years later, the Jewish Community-Joodse Gemeinde was founded.

During the Nazi occupation of Holland, aproximately 13,000 Jews were sent to concentration camps. It is estimated that there are about 20,000 Dutch Jews living in Israel today, and that 12,000 Jews live in Holland.

The reverse of the medal depicts one of the former synagogues of the community. This synagogue was used up to 1943, when the Germans put an end to Jewish life in Amsterdam. On either side of the building appear the Jewish dates 5396-5747, equivalent to 1635-1985. The two Hebrew words below the synagogue translate to "In the City of Amsterdam."

On the obverse appears JOODSE GEMEINDE AMSTERDAM (NIHS) JEWISH COMMUNITY OF AMSTERDAM, the initials NIHS for NEDERALANS ISRAELITISHE HOOFDSYNAGGE, which is the



official name of the community. There is a Magen David with a harp inside and the Hebrew letters Kof, Alef, Alef for the Kehila Ashkensait Amsterdam, Jewish Community of Amsterdam and the dates 1635-1985.

Mrs. Polak-Walvisch had the idea to mint this medal, which incidentally was designed by her husband Mr. M.H. Polak.

The late Dr. Arthur Polak, with whom I had the honor to correspond, was the premier collector of Jewish medals in Holland. He published a book, Jewish Medals in the Netherlands, listing 92 of these medals relating to Jews. In the preface, he wrote "I shall welcome any additions with gratitude" This beautiful medal is certainly an important addition to this book.

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